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An Extract from the Diary of Prof. J. W. Bailey.*

WEST POINT, May 21st, 1835.

Be this day ever remembered! for on it I first became acquainted with a scientific botanist, and he, too, the first in America; in short no less a person than the distinguished Dr. John Torrey, of New York. I was introduced to him at the hotel by Lieut. Mather. I was much surprised to find him so young a man. After conversing awhile he proposed a botanical excursion, and we proceeded down the hill behind the hotel, collecting *Corydalis aurea*, *Cardamine Virginica*, *Celtis occidentalis*, etc.; we were, however, soon driven in by the rain. We adjourned to my room, where we held a conversation on botany, which to me was highly interesting. He says that the plant called *Gaultheria hispida* is no *Gaultheria*, but a new genus having the fruit of an *Oxycoccus* and flower of *Vaccinium*. (This refers to *Chiogenes hispidula*, T. & G. It was called *Gaultheria hispidula* by Muhl., W. W. B.) He mentioned some anecdotes of Prof. Lindley; among others, the fact that the "Outline of the First Principles of Botany" was wholly written on his journey to and from his residence, about six miles from London. When the stage stopped at an inn, Lindley would write on a scrap of paper a sentence or two of the work, using his hat as a desk. This was but one instance of the constant devotion and industry of the professor.

MAY 22d, 1835.—This day being very fine, Dr. Torrey and myself made a short botanical excursion among the rocks (from the hotel around to Kosciusko's Garden). He pointed out the *Lycopodium* (In a note after *Lycopodium rupestre* in my father's copy of Bigelow's "Plants of Boston," he says: "West Point, May 22d, 1835, pointed out to me by Dr. Torrey." This fixes the plant as *Selaginella rupestris*, Spring., W. W. B.) I had not noticed it before. He also stated that he had found *Taxus* somewhere near Gee's Point. (The extreme or lighthouse end of West Point, W. W. B.) He related to me a curious and dangerous adventure that once happened to him. In company with a friend of his, during one of his journeys, he had attempted to follow a mountain path which had not been travelled upon since

* Communicated by Prof. W. W. Bailey.

the spring freshets, and which had become covered with loose pebbles. He soon lost the path and suddenly found himself slipping. He called to his friend, who was in the same predicament, and advised him to lie down and attempt to stop himself with his extended hands and feet. They both lay down, but still found that they were slowly sliding. Torrey was ahead and could not stop himself till he reached the brink of a precipice of three hundred feet descent. Here he stopped, but the slightest movement would have caused him to go over. His friend had, by means of a knife, obtained a foot-hold, and was able to retain his position. Torrey asked him if he could possibly assist him, for he, Torrey, feared that he would soon slip. His friend replied that he could not leave his position to assist him, but if Torrey could give him anything to take hold of he might perhaps pull him up. Torrey took his handkerchief, wound it round his hand, and let the wind blow the end to his friend who caught it, and thus rescued the doctor from his perilous situation. They then, by means, I presume, of their knife (although the doctor did not explain this) succeeded in clambering up to a safe place. At the time the doctor thought of using his handkerchief his feet were actually hanging over the precipice, and so hazardous was his position that he did not dare raise his arm to reach his friend.

The doctor mentioned some curious observations which he had made upon the *Campanula rotundifolia*. He had noticed that the plant bears in the early part of the season apetalous flowers often with tri-sepalous calyx, which he had carefully examined without perceiving any trace of stamens or pistils; yet, strange to say, these flowers perfected seed as in the usual flowers. He knew, however, that stamens and pistils in some form or other must be present, and, accordingly, on careful examination with a microscope he found the base of the interior of the flower was divided into five distinct divisions, and he soon found that the apparent base was really a membrane composed of five scales, under which the stamens and pistils were concealed. The doctor left in the steamboat for New York. His address is 30 McDougal Street.